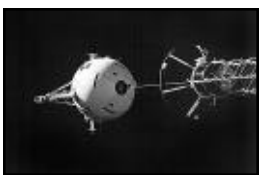




National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center
Houston, Texas



Super science

The STS-76 crew returns with a treasure trove of data and photos to share. Photos on Page 3.



Comet Hyakutake

A JSC employee captures a comet on film as it passes near the Earth. Photo on Page 4.

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NASA Photo

Russian cosmonauts and American astronauts exchange gifts in the base block module of the Russian Mir Space Station soon after *Atlantis* docked with the Russian outpost. From left are Mission Specialist Linda Godwin, Commander Kevin Chilton, Mir 21 Flight Engineer Yuri Usachov, Cosmonaut/Researcher Shannon Lucid, Mir 21 Commander Yuriy Onufrienko, Mission Specialist Ronald Sega and Pilot Rick Searfoss.

Electrical shocks spark action

By Rindy Carmichael

JSC's Safety Office reports that unsafe electrical devices are like "rattlesnakes waiting to bite us," and is urging all employees to attend next week's Electrical Safety Fair.

Bill Crittenden, Facility Safety Engineer for Hernandez Engineering, said there have been reports of faulty power strips producing sparks.

"Energized cords, power strips, and extension cords in hidden areas are like silent rattlesnakes waiting to bite us," he said. "You should never work on equipment that you can't see."

Jeff Kling, Flight Controller for Rockwell Space Operations, recently received a shock while unplugging a printer from a power strip surge protector. The surge protector was located behind some furniture on the floor and out of sight of the employee unplugging the printer cord. It apparently had become stuck to the floor, the plastic case had separated, and energized electrical components were exposed. "When I reached back to unplug the cord, I received a shock from the exposed components," Kling said.

The ACCO surge protector is

U.L. approved and equipped with a remote switch that turns the power strip on and off. This switch makes it very easy to forget and neglect the power strip after it is placed in service. This contributed to the power strip being left in place long enough for it to adhere to the floor.

"Since surge protectors can be found in offices throughout JSC, they should be monitored regularly," said Dan Clem of the Health, Safety and Environmental Compliance Office. "Approximately 12 percent of close calls reported to our office

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Former astronaut dies in plane crash

Former Astronaut Robert Overmyer died last Friday when the light aircraft he was testing over St. Louis County, Minn., crashed.

Memorial services were Tuesday at Clear Lake United Methodist Church.

"Bob Overmyer spent most of his adult life in the service of his country as a Marine aviator and Air Force test pilot and NASA astronaut," said JSC Director George Abbey.

"He played a key role in the U.S. space program beginning with Apollo and continuing through Skylab, Apollo-Soyuz and through the development, testing and operation of the space shuttle where he flew on the first operational shuttle mission and commanded a highly successful shuttle Spacelab mission," Abbey said. "More recently, his years of space flight experience were applied in private industry where he made major contributions to the development of the International Space Station."

Overmyer was selected as an astronaut in 1969. His first assignment was engineering development duties on the Skylab Program. From 1971 to 1976, Overmyer sup-

ported Apollo crews, the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project and the Space Shuttle Approach and Landing Test Program.

In 1982, Overmyer was the pilot for STS-5, the first fully operational flight of the shuttle with a crew of four. *Columbia's* crew deployed the first two commercial communications satellites and conducted numerous experiments to document shuttle performance.

Overmyer flew again on STS-51B. As commander, he oversaw a crew of six conduct a wide range of scientific experiments on *Challenger*.

Overmyer retired from JSC in 1986 and later went to work for McDonnell Douglas as the deputy director of flight crew systems. He later became director of utilization and operations supporting space station. He retired from McDonnell Douglas in 1995 and was working as a test pilot for Cirrus Design Corp. He was testing a small engine prototype plane Friday when it went down near Duluth International Airport.

"He will be sorely missed by his many longtime colleagues and friends at NASA and in the aerospace community," Abbey said.



Overmyer

Atlantis crew prepares for Sunday return

By Karen Schmidt

As the crew of *Atlantis* prepares to return Sunday, the STS-76 mission can be recorded in history books as the first to deliver more than 4,000 pounds of supplies to Mir and accomplish a space walk while docked.

"We are beginning the colonization of space here," Commander Kevin Chilton said during a crew news conference Tuesday. "We have been to and from just as the earlier explorers were to and from North American from Europe and finally they settled and then they started to do productive work and founded this great nation. I kind of look at this in a similar light. We have been coming to and from space and when we get here permanently then we can start seeing the fruits of our labors."

Chilton, along with Pilot Rick Searfoss and Mission Specialists Ron Sega, Rich Clifford and Linda Godwin, said good-bye to the Mir 21 crew—Commander Yuri Onufrienko, Flight Engineer Yuri Usachev and Cosmonaut/Researcher Shannon Lucid—Thursday as *Atlantis* undocked for its return to Kennedy Space Center at 6 a.m. CST Sunday. The crew is expected to return to Houston Sunday afternoon.

Before undocking, Godwin and Clifford performed the first space walk during docked operations. The two space walkers began preparing for their six-hour space walk Tues-

day as the hatches were closed between the Russian station and *Atlantis* to pressurize the shuttle for the space walk. Godwin and Clifford floated out of *Atlantis'* airlock at 12:36 a.m. Wednesday and made their way to the Mir Environmental Experiment Payloads stored in *Atlantis'* cargo bay.

The two space walkers floated up to Mir's docking module and attached the MEEP experiments and unfolded the suitcase-like package to expose the experiments to Mir's environment. The experiments—designed to study the effects of space debris and materials to be used for the International Space Station—will remain attached to the docking module until late 1997 when the STS-86 crew will retrieve them and return

the experiments to Earth. The space walk, which also retrieved a video camera purposely left attached to the docking module and tested International Space Station tools, was completed without a hitch.

On Tuesday, the crew reported viewing the Comet Hyakutake and completed the transfer of supplies.

"We looked up into the night sky and saw this green glowing matter just streaking across the sky," Clifford said Tuesday. "It looked like it stretched from horizon to horizon. It was absolutely spectacular. It was brighter than the stars around it."

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SCH adds new addition to facility

Space Center Houston will make its first major addition to the center since its grand opening in 1992, officials announced last week.

The \$1.2 million attraction, "Kids' Space Place," will be an interactive hands-on area targeting children ages 3-11. The addition, set to open June 1996, will allow children to experience different aspects of space exploration and the human space flight program.

"With the addition of Kids' Space Place, Space Center Houston opens up the excitement of the space program to those who will guarantee its future—the children," said Richard Allen, general manager of SCH. "In each and every activity area, the kids not only will have fun, but also learn about space exploration and basic science and math concepts in a hands-on, user-friendly atmosphere. We are proud to offer this new, high quality-attraction to the center."

Comprised of 17 different activity areas with 40 individual interactive stations to explore and investigate, Kids' Space Place will be a two-story attraction located within

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Space Center Houston's Commander Quest breaks ground on the new "Kids' Space Place" set to open June 1996.